



October 21, 2011

Ray LaHood, Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: TIGER III Discretionary Grants

Dear Secretary LaHood,

On behalf of the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), I am writing to support the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) application for TIGER discretionary grant funds for the Montlake Triangle Project in Seattle, Washington. This project supports SDOT's mission to deliver a safe and reliable transportation system that enhances Seattle's environment and economic vitality. The Montlake Triangle Project improves pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access in this important urban center, provides significant citywide and regional multi-modal connections, and ensures safe movement of people and goods. Additionally, the project is consistent with the City of Seattle's Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Master Plans and is an excellent example of successful interagency collaboration.

Over the past several years, the State of Washington, local and regional transit agencies, the City of Seattle, and the University of Washington have partnered to develop a vision for a multimodal center at the University's triangle-shaped parcel known as the Montlake Triangle. This location is a key regional transit destination with connections to the University of Washington campus and medical center, local and regional bus service, regional bicycle and pedestrian trails, and the University Link light rail station that will connect to downtown Seattle when it opens in 2016.

The Montlake Triangle Project integrates several agency projects in the Triangle area to accommodate safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle movements, fast and reliable transit service, and enhanced connections between local bus routes, bus rapid transit, and light rail service.

The Montlake Triangle Project meets the objectives set forth in the grant criteria in the following ways:

- Improves safety and efficiency for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motor vehicles traveling on SR 520, SR 513, and NE Pacific Place by constructing two grade-separated pedestrian/bicycle crossings;
- Increases the economic competitiveness of the region, the state, and the nation by improving access to transit and transit connections through relocated bus stops that support the efficient flow of people between the critical employment areas of downtown Seattle and downtown Bellevue, and between the University of Washington and other regional employers (e.g., Microsoft);
- Enhances our region's sustainability by providing a multimodal center with high-quality, non-motorized connections between many destinations and modes, improving access, and increasing non-motorized travel; and



- Encourages cross-agency collaboration and creates efficiencies for several public projects in the Montlake Triangle area by creating strong partnerships during the development of this concept.

The Montlake Triangle Project represents the culmination of years of close coordination and complex multi-agency partnering to create a truly integrated multimodal center. The Puget Sound region is growing rapidly, and this new center will serve thousands of people each day. On behalf of the Seattle Department of Transportation, Mayor Michael McGinn, the Seattle City Council, the Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board, and the Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board, I strongly support the Montlake Triangle Project and its benefits for transit users, drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians. I encourage the U.S. Department of Transportation to award this grant to WSDOT.

Sincerely,



Peter Hahn, Director
Seattle Department of Transportation